

Phoenix Rising

RBHA RICHMOND
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
AUTHORITY

**Voices
United in
Recovery**

EDUCATION

“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.”

~ John Dewey

Volume 8, Issue 1

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ART
by William Torain

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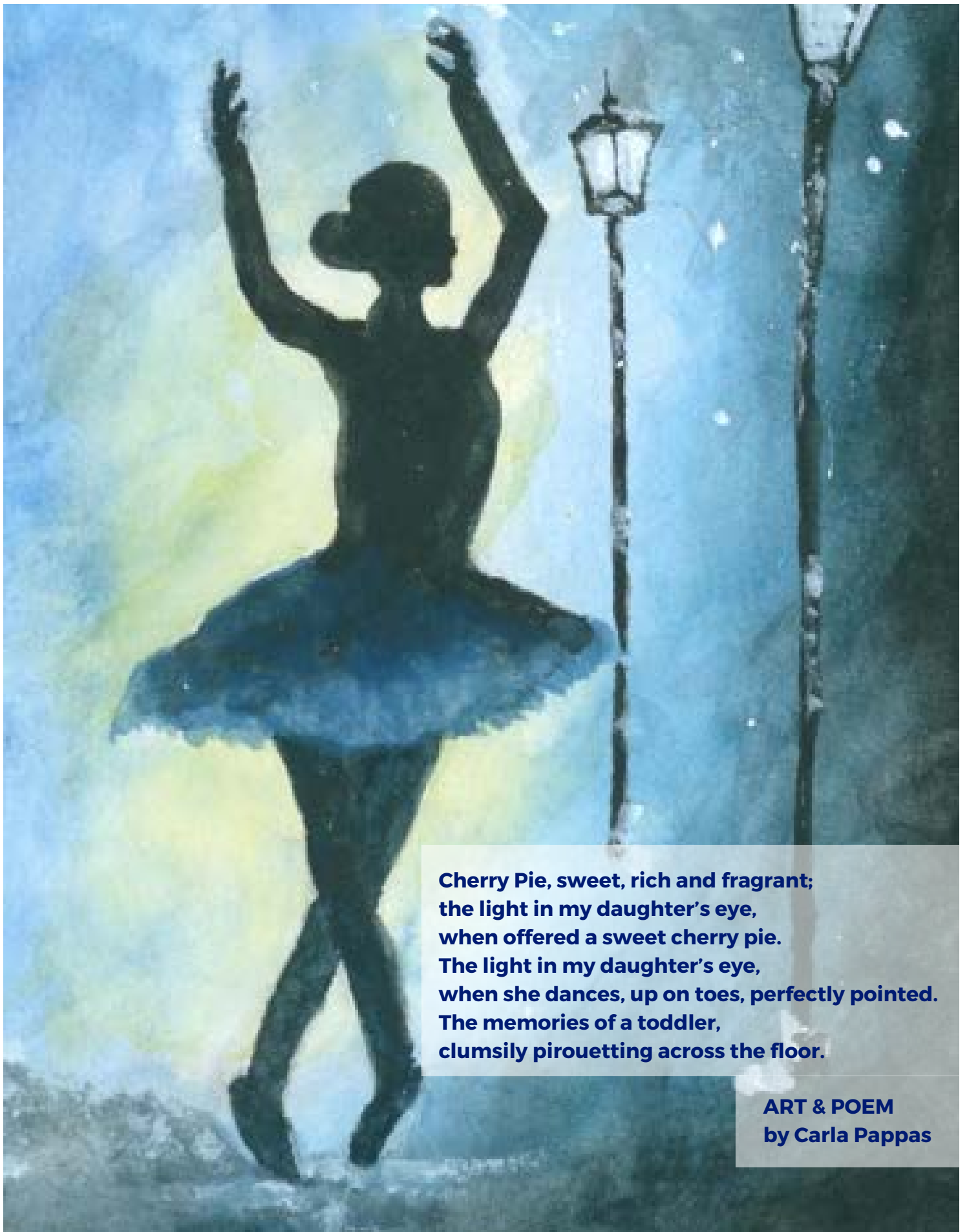
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EDITORIAL POEM

by Beth Wiltshire

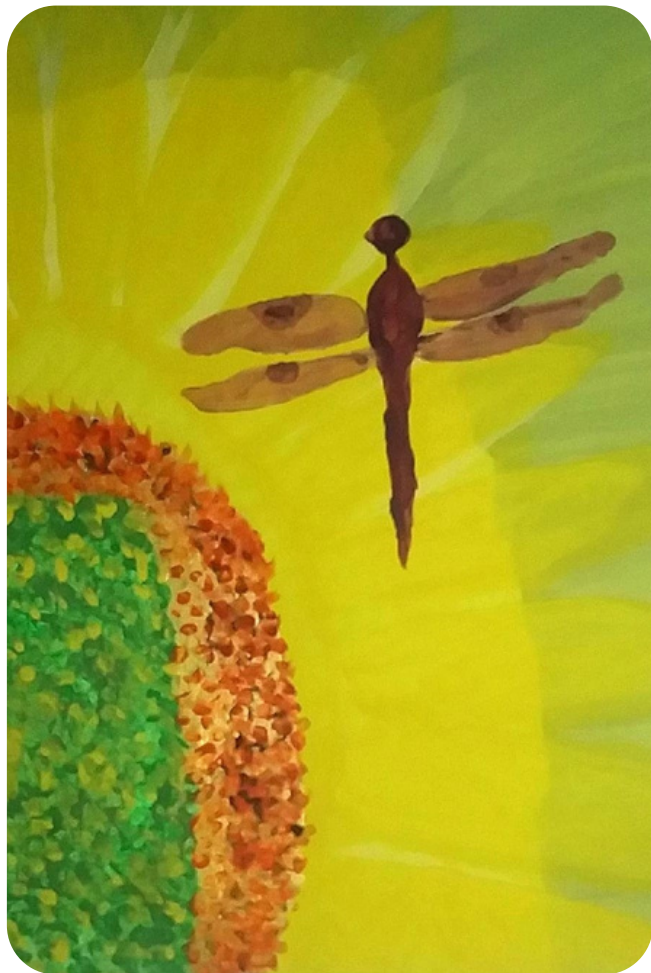
Education
is an old-fashioned word.
It smells
of musty books
in libraries
with mahogany shelving.
It's in the pensive frown
of a gray-haired professor
as he makes a point in class
or studies a hefty book.
Education
is more:
learning to ride a bike
or to swim;
setting up house;
deciding who is trustworthy
and who is not;
singing in a choir and letting
exquisite harmonies
seep into your mind.
Education
can wound the spirit
or it can make
your soul sing.
May your life be more like
a phoenix rising
than the ashes of despair
from which it comes.
Err on the side of joy.



**Cherry Pie, sweet, rich and fragrant;
the light in my daughter's eye,
when offered a sweet cherry pie.
The light in my daughter's eye,
when she dances, up on toes, perfectly pointed.
The memories of a toddler,
clumsily pirouetting across the floor.**

**ART & POEM
by Carla Pappas**

POEM & ART



Back in Meadow Park

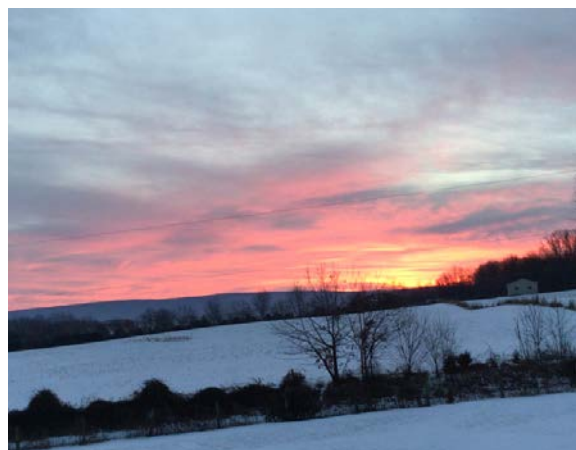
On a warm Sunday afternoon in the fall
That feels almost like a lovely mid-May day
My old friend, the green shadows
Cast by the calm, over-arching trees
Are back.
So peaceful, so serene
It's almost like all the conflict,
chaos and confusion
That mark almost any work week
Never happened at all
And the cool fall breeze
Reminds me that soon the leaves
Will fall
And my peaceful dark green "space"
Will go away
Only to return again
In Spring
A cycle as reassuring
As Faith, itself
And just as inevitable.

ART
by Guest Artist Dorothy Wyatt

POEM
by Darryl Carlton

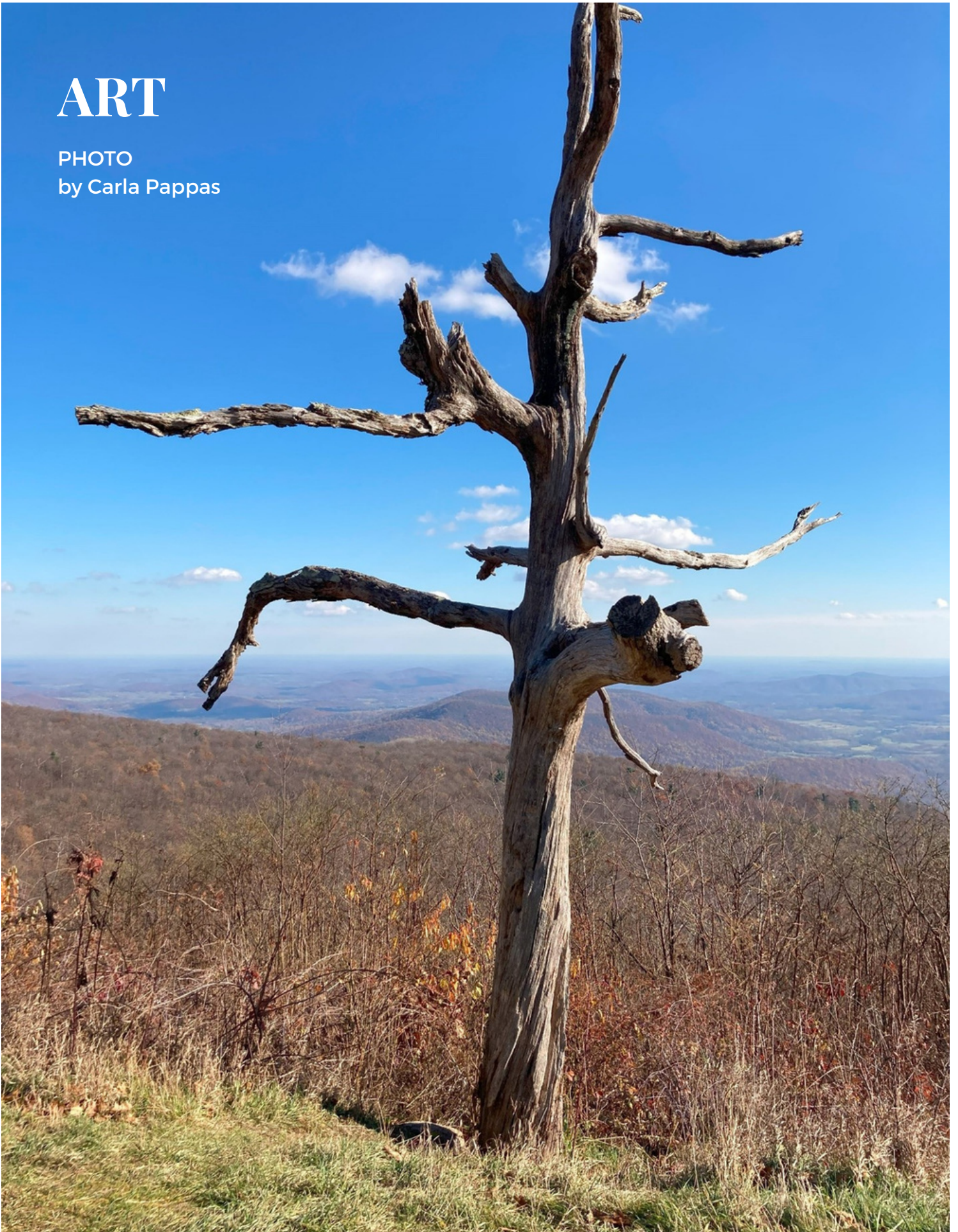


PHOTOS
by Guest Artist
Luanne Holsinger



ART

PHOTO
by Carla Pappas



POEM

Lonesome Tree

by Nicholas Pappas

We went for a ride up Skyline Drive
and there standing on a mountain
in all its glory was a lonesome tree.

We were drawn to its beauty,
stark, like an old black and white photo;
the one you discover at the bottom of a drawer.
It looked forgotten and in need of company,
which we provided.

Its leaves had left and stopped returning long ago
and were, we imagined, living in the valley below.
Its limbs, contorted by age, were pulled in every direction,
most notably towards the fall sky, as if in prayer or deep meditation.
They were a site to behold for anyone whose eyes were open.

As I stood before it, I wondered to myself;
why do we leave those who grow old?

Why do we stop listening to their stories told
and learning from their lessons lived?

Why do we leave them to weep alone,
silent tears that fall into the earth?

And fail to see the beauty in the cracks in their bark
and the trunk that stands and observes?

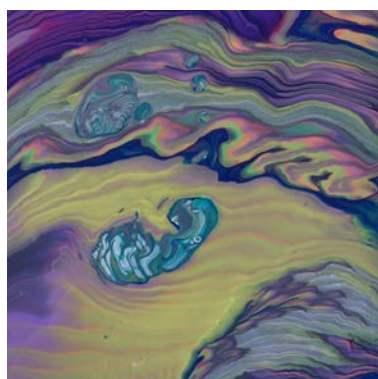
And what of the fallen trees, who still breathe,
waiting for passers-by to acknowledge their presence
and sit with them for a visit.

Imagine a world where we found wisdom in unexpected places
and in the silence right in front of us.

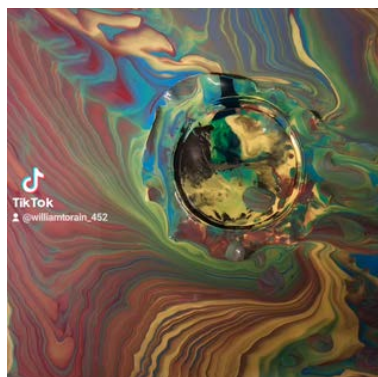
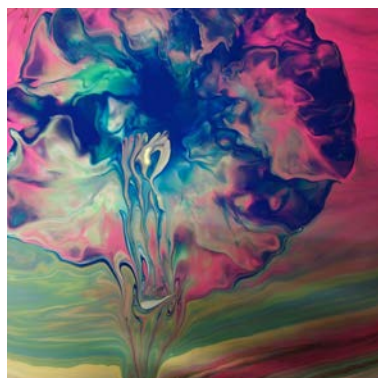
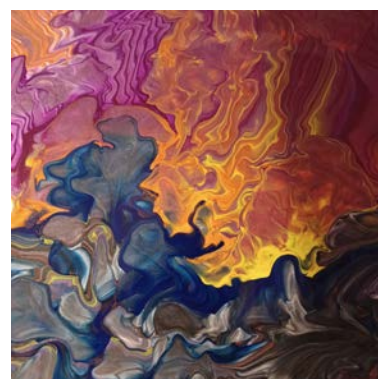
Imagine a world where we listened to trees.

November 14, 2023

POEM & ART



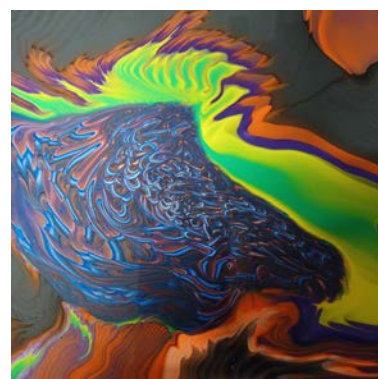
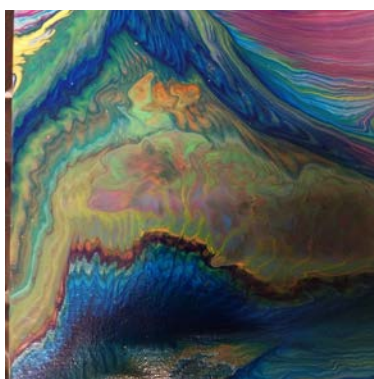
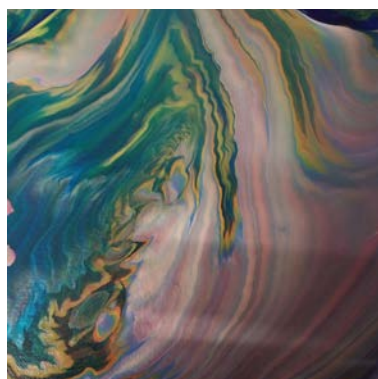
A brisk walk
in the steel fresh air
in the morning;
A lively exchange of
lovely love and listening
to babbling birds;
The cars with their
silver undergarments
starting, choking and
finding their way
along the patched, cobbled
street;
People waking up
and rubbing sore eyes.
This is a new day beginning
where potential is queen
and events have not soured the day,
have not marred
starry gazes of hope.



POEM
by **Beth Wiltshire**



ART
by **William Torain**



POEM

LOVE IS BRILLIANT

I. Love is brilliant.
It is like blue skies
eating watermelon
on the front porch
in the summertime
like
a flashlight in darkness
shining on a nativity scene
at a Christmas play
with three holy crosses
where Jesus was baptized
in the river Jordan.

II. Love is blooming
like a skill
like an internship
or an entry level position
or like a fictional character
on Sesame Street.
A melody
(songs of wisdom singing)
a form of aromatherapy.
He who finds a wife
finds a good thing!
His worth is farther above
the robins.
We're not an island
to ourselves.

III. A sensual touch
A feeling of euphoria
a kiss to lovers,
two joined together
in matrimony
a smell, a mint julep
on my breath
a taste of peppermint
a sudden epiphany
a beginner's luck
like at a poker table
spin the wheel
always bet on black.

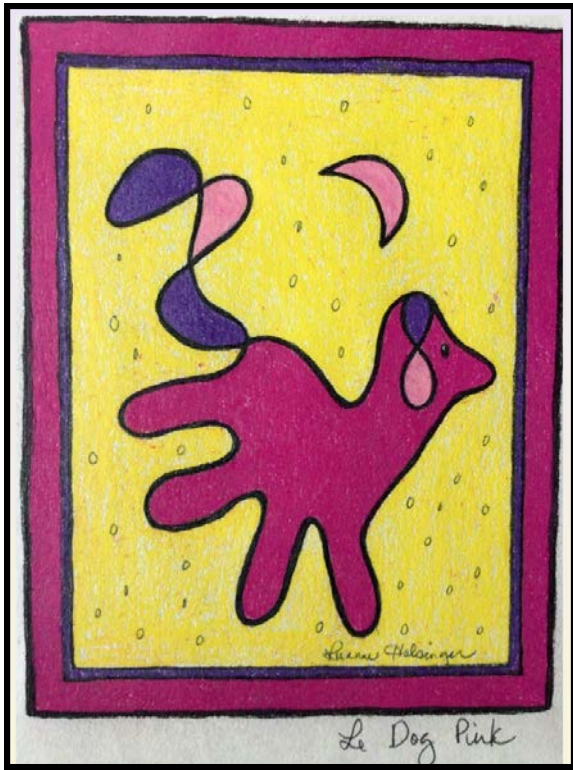
IV. A symphony
Sounds of Albe Sure and Keith Sweat,
violins and trumpets
noise playing my heart and thumps:
"I surrender all--
You got me twisted all around!"
A bouquet of food and pastries
being served by the caterers.
Tears/fears
Crazy love,
dancing toe to toe
with my father
like a satire.
The Bold and the Beautiful.

V. Carnation/purple/lavender dresses
Men in their suits,
a black tie event
Limousines pulling up on the gravel:
A memory they wouldn't forget!
Caviar
A glass of champagne, "please"
Pass the Courvoisier
A new rebirth.
A feast to the bride and the best man.

VI. Who loves you baby
I'm the man!
I got your back forever
and you got mine!
Like an entry level position
It's brilliant
not blind!
Blue skies,
eating watermelon
in the countryside
on the front porch
the first day we met:
love's not blind!

POEM
by Adriane Clay

ART & POEMS



**ART by Guest Artist
Luanne Holsinger**

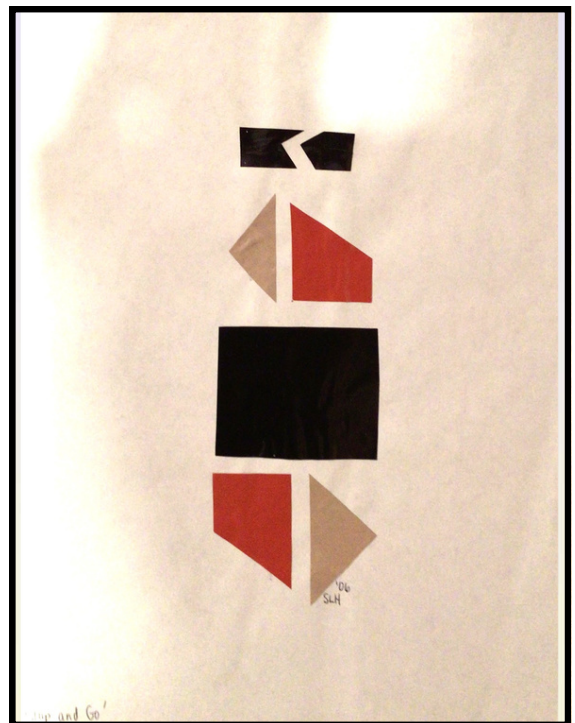
September, early evening
The summer weather lingers,
But there is a fall coolness
In the early evening
Here, in the park,
The shadows are lengthening
It's pretty crowded tonight
Because the weather is so beautiful
But the two gentlemen
Who were on the bench besides me
Have just left
Leaving quiet
Where their lively conversation was
There are a few phone calls going on
But they are just murmurs
Against the chirps of the dusk crickets
As the sun fades into dappled shadows
Brilliant, but ephemeral
Like all our mortal lives.

POEM by Darryl Carlton

Education

In my life, I have been a student
Much more often
Than I have been a teacher
In fact, I have been a student
All my life
Only a fool thinks he "knows everything "
Wise people know there is so much more
Left to learn
In fact, that just might be the difference
Between the Foolish and the Wise
A full cup can't hold any more milk
An empty cup awaits fulfillment
So be an empty cup
And become filled with Wonder
At this glorious universe
Full of spontaneous beauty
And marvelous "accidents "
Waiting to be comprehended
By mortal mind.

POEM by Darryl Carlton



**ART by Guest Artist
Luanne Holsinger**

ART & POEM



An Altar to Yourself

Paint, Paper and Pen

POEM and ART by Carla Pappas

What I could do with paint, paper and pen.
I could create waves that could take me away,
until the words were ready to flow onto the paper.
I could paint pebbles that skip along the river,
I could dive into. And when I am tired, I could climb the river bank.
I could paint mountains standing tall and regal the way mountains do.
I could write about the trees and the pine forest and scents that take me to the holidays.
I could paint cards with snowman for those I love, save one
to place on an altar with my paint, paper and pen.
And when the summer comes and the snowman is gone,
I could pick up my paint, paper and pen
and build another one.

Phoenix Rising



PHOENIX
ART by Fas A. Sifer

To submit articles, poetry, or art to the Phoenix Rising,
please contact Beth Wiltshire at wiltshireb@rbha.org or

RBHA

107 South 5th Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

All submissions are welcomed, but subject to editing.
We want to hear from you!

This newsletter is produced by

Voices United in Recovery

www.rbha.org